

Message Text

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43

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 SSM-05

SAM-01 SAB-01 IO-11 AID-05 TRSE-00 /090 W

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R 091353Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9085

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

UNCLAS CAIRO 0272

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PFOR EG IS LE

SUBJECT: CAIRO PRESS ON POSSIBLE ISRAELI INTERVENTION IN LEBANON

1. CAIRO ARABIC PRESS JANUARY 9 IS SILENT ON ISRAELI MINDEF PERES REPORTED WARNING OF POSSIBLE ISRAELI INTERVENTION IN LEBANON IN EVENT OF SYRIAN INVASION, ALTHOUGH ENGLISH AND FRENCH LANGUAGE PAPERS CARRY WIRE SERVICE ACCOUNTS OF PERES' REMARKS. LOCAL PRESS IS MAINTAINING NOTEWORTHY SILENCE ON SYRIAN FONMIN FKADDAM'S ALLEGED THREAT TO INTERVENE IN LEBANON TO PREVENT PARTITION. ONLY COMMENTARY SO FAR IS GUMHURIYYA'S CHARGE (JANUARY 8) THAT KHADDAM HAS SHOWN TRUE AGGRESSIVE COLORS AND AKHBAR'S POINTED REMARK (JANUARY 9) THAT SYRIAN PAPERS ARE IGNORING KHADDAM STATEMENT.

2. IN LENGTHY INTERVIEW PUBLISHED ON FRONT PAGE OF AHRAM, HOWEVER, ARAB LEAGUE SEC GEN MAHMUD RIAN WARNS THAT ISRAEL IS PLANNING AGGRESSION TO SEIZE SOUTHERN LEBANON IN ORDER TO TAP WATER RESOURCES OF LITANI RIVER. RIAD CHARGES THAT, SINCE ISRAEL KNOWS ARAB STATES ARE NOT PLANNING TO ATTACK HER, ISRAEL IS SEEKING TO EXPLOIT CURRENT "IMBALANCE" IN AREA AS EXCUSE TO LAUNCH ITS AGGRESSION WITH SUPPORT OF WORLD
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OPINION AND A CERTAIN "BIG POWER". RIAD ESTIMATES IT

WOULD TAKE ISRAEL ABOUT HALF HOUR TO RREACH LITANI, AND
CHARGES THAT ISRAELI RAIDS AND INCURSIONS IN SOUTHERN
LEBANON ARE PART OF HER DESIGN TO DEPOPULATE THE AREA.
ARAB OR ANY OTHER FOREIGN INTERVENTION WOULD BE
PREFERABLE TO ISRAELI INTERVENTION, SAYS RIAD, SINCE AT
LEAST FORMER WOULD SOME DAY COME TO END.
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